AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-25 (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method for using a computer system running a computer-aided design (CAD) tool ~~to~~ in generating one or more outputs, thereby activating at least one payment request in accordance with a contract associated with the use of ~~enforce a usage contract for~~ the CAD tool in generating the one or more outputs, the method comprising:

providing a first payment for the CAD tool in accordance with the contract, wherein the first payment is associated with user access to the CAD tool;

using the CAD tool, wherein the computer system running the CAD tool includes criteria for requesting at least one additional payment for the CAD tool, each additional payment being associated with generating an output, the computer system being responsive to one or more trigger conditions corresponding to the criteria;

~~entering a trigger condition from the usage contract into the computer;~~ and

~~generating~~ receiving a payment request when ~~a data file~~ an output generated by the CAD tool satisfies ~~the~~ a trigger condition.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 26, ~~wherein generating the payment request comprises~~ further comprising sending a payment to a vendor of the CAD tool ~~as part of a transaction that generates the data file~~ in response to the payment request and in accordance with the contract.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein ~~generating the payment request comprises disabling~~ the trigger condition disables a set of features of the CAD tool.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein ~~generating the payment request comprises adding~~ the trigger condition adds a watermark to the ~~data file~~ output for identifying the ~~data file~~ output as having been produced by the CAD tool.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 29, wherein the watermark comprises at least one of non-functional data, a naming convention, a spacing convention, an ordering convention, and non-functional elements.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 26, wherein the CAD tool comprises an integrated circuit (IC) design tool.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 31, wherein the ~~data file~~ output has a form of at least one of hardware description language (HDL), register transfer level description (RTL), a macro, a hard macro, a soft macro, a core, a hard core, a soft core, a net-list, a synthesizable net-list, a layout, a process-independent layout, and a process-dependent layout.

33. (New) A method for monitoring a use of a computer-aided-design (CAD) tool in generating one or more outputs, thereby facilitating enforcement of a contract associated with the use of the CAD tool in generating the one or more outputs, the method comprising:

receiving a first payment for the CAD tool in accordance with the contract as a vendor of the CAD tool, wherein the first payment is associated with user access to the CAD tool;

entering criteria for requesting at least one additional payment for the CAD tool into a computer system running the CAD tool, each additional payment being associated with the CAD tool generating an output, the computer system being responsive to one or more trigger conditions corresponding to the criteria; and

generating a payment request when an output generated by the CAD tool satisfies a trigger condition.

34. (New) The method of Claim 33, further comprising receiving another payment as the vendor of the CAD tool in response to the payment request and in accordance with the contract.

35. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein the trigger condition disables a set of features of the CAD tool.

36. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein the trigger condition adds a watermark to the output for identifying the output as having been generated by the CAD tool.

37. (New) The method of Claim 36, wherein the watermark comprises at least one of non-functional data, a naming convention, a spacing convention, an ordering convention, and non-functional elements.

38. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein the CAD tool comprises an integrated circuit (IC) design tool.

39. (New) The method of Claim 38, wherein the output has a form of at least one of hardware description language (HDL), register transfer level description (RTL), a macro, a hard macro, a soft macro, a core, a hard core, a soft core, a net-list, a synthesizable net-list, a layout, a process-independent layout, and a process-dependent layout.